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AUTHOR Fahrer, Robert F.; Michelich, Joanna K.
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ABSTRACT

Prepared for the National Dissemination Project to suggest ways in which community colleges might better serve the needs of minority and disadvantaged students, this report addresses itself to the problem of community college articulation. Three problem areas of the articulation activities are: the student himself, curriculum and instruction, and student personnel services. Within the framework of curriculum and instruction are three key elements: admissions, evaluation of transfer courses, and curriculum planning. Because AA/BA articulation is a process that is dependent for success on attitudes held by participants, the most effective articulation program is largely a result of carefully developed partnership by the major participants: high schools, community colleges, and senior colleges. (DB)

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PLANNING AA/BA ARTICULATION

By: Robert F. Fahrer
and Joanna K. Michelich

Washington State University

A report of the
National Dissemination Project
for Post-Secondary Education

June, 1974

Research & Planning Office
Washington State Board for
Community College Education
815 N.E. Northgate Way
Seattle, Washington 98125

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FOREWORD

This report was prepared for the National Dissemination Project to suggest ways in which community colleges might better serve the needs of minority and disadvantaged students through planning.

The National Dissemination Project is an outgrowth of earlier projects funded or sponsored by the Office of Economic Opportunity to develop comprehensive educational services for the disadvantaged, and to provide institutional support in program development. One of its major missions is to provide information and assistance to planners and educators at the community college level, by responding to their requests for specific data and reports.

This report is the result of a national poll conducted by the National Dissemination Project, which identified the topics on which most respondents indicated a need for further information. The response to our poll was sufficiently large to indicate that there are certain "key" concerns felt by community college persons across the U.S. Each of our reports addresses such a national concern; and, it is hoped, provides the kinds of information that will be of help to those requesting it.

We would like to extend our special thanks to Dr. Raymond E. Schultz, and the graduate division of Washington State University, for their assistance in preparing this series of National Dissemination Reports. The work put in by Dr. Schultz's "team" on all these topics represents a distinguished contribution to knowledge on community college concerns.

The National Dissemination Project will continue until August 31, 1974 to provide information and assistance to help individuals, colleges and systems better serve the needs of students, primarily those classified as "non-traditional" and "disadvantaged."

For further information, contact:

Deb K. Das, Project Director
Research & Planning Office
Washington State Board for
Community College Education
815 N.E. Northgate Way
Seattle, Washington 98125

I. Introduction and Background

Knoell and Medsker indicated in their 1965 study From Junior To Senior College that a conservative estimate of the community college role in the national enrollment pattern placed one in four first-time students in post-secondary education in some type of two-year institution. Frederick Kintzer in his work, Middleman in Higher Education, indicated that the number enrolled in community colleges for the 1970 fall term was 41% of the total enrolled in post-secondary education (p. xi). James L. Wattenbarger's introduction to the Middleman in Higher Education also recognized the phenomenal growth of the community colleges (p. vii). He states that the total enrollment in higher education in 1945 was equal to the 1972 community college enrollment.

These new community colleges provide many benefits and many new problems for higher education generally. Among the most vexing of problems is that related to the topic of this paper: planning AA/BA articulation. One assumption is that many who attend community colleges intend to "transfer" to a four-year institution to finish their schooling and obtain baccalaureate degrees.

The student who has completed his/her education at a community college TRANSFERS to a four-year (or upper-division) institution to receive a baccalaureate degree. ARTICULATION is a broad term encompassing the transfer process in toto and institutes a vital link in insuring qualified students and open door to the next level of education. It is a method that should provide a continuous, smooth flow of students from community colleges to baccalaureate degree-granting institutions.

Basic elements of articulation activities might be delineated into three major problem areas. The first is the student himself (Knoell and Medsker, 1965). Academic and economic resources may dictate degree goals and choice of program at either the community college or four-year institution. Included in this general delineated area are characteristics and requirements of colleges to which the student might be admitted. Second, the area of curriculum and instruction is vitally linked to the acceptance of transfer credit, coordination of methods and materials used in teaching, grading standards, course and classroom experimentation, and preparation of teachers at both types of institutions. The third basic problem area is that of student personnel services. Important for articulation activities within this area might be coordination of financial aid programs, orientation programs, and exchange of information about college characteristics and programs to improve counseling and student adjustment to the transfer institution.

The primary topic of this paper relates more to the second of these three elements than to the other two. Within the framework of curriculum and instruction as it relates to "Planning AA/BA Articulation" are three key elements: admissions, evaluation of transfer courses, and curriculum planning. These three will be the foci of Section III.

Section IV will specifically concern itself with current practices and trends in articulation programs across the United States. Direction will be provided to these questions: When the number of institutions precludes direct representation from each institution, how can desired participation be attained? Should articulation machinery be voluntary or legally mandated? Is there a need for both institutional and statewide activities? How can good communications be achieved and maintained?

II. Identification of Major Obstacles in Articulation

Although Knoell and Medsker have stated that "articulation is as much an attitude as it is a process," (Knoell and Medsker, 1965), many two-year and four-year institutions have reacted negatively to attempts to promote articulation agreements because of concern about process as well as traditional attitude.

Understandably, one of the prime complaints that four-year institutions level at the community colleges is that the senior institution feels that it should determine curricular requirements for all students under its auspices, whether transfer or native. When community colleges develop transfer courses without consulting four-year institutions, the latter's resistance is inevitable. Secondly, because of the nature of comprehensive community colleges, two-year colleges unintentionally, perhaps, have too often mixed "sub-college" material with college material in courses that are classified for transfer (Kintzer, 1973 B). Too, these same two-year colleges fail their students by not informing

them that 'sub-college" or vocational courses do not transfer; the universities feel that they become the scapegoats when the responsibility for informing potential transfer students about transfer courses falls on the shoulders of the community colleges. Concommitantly, too often community colleges develop transfer courses without consultation with senior institutions. Failure to establish formal methods of communication concerning transfer policies and classification of course content, and failure to provide adequate guidelines to students are additional obstacles to articulation from the senior institution's perspective.

Community colleges claim, on the other hand, that because of rigid transfer course requirements, they lose the autonomy to develop a curriculum which meets the needs of their students; to meet course requirements that will satisfy senior institutional requirements, they are simply not free to develop their own programs. A second irritant to community colleges is that the senior institutions fail to accord transfer students equal admissions treatment in terms of scholastic standards that are applied to entering freshmen. As claim the senior institutions, community colleges feel that the "other" segment of higher education formalizes curricular change without informing their counterpart. Perhaps more deadly in the eyes of the community colleges is the practice by senior institutions of refusing transfer credit for vocational courses even though the senior institutions offer similar courses which lead to the baccalaureate degree (e.g., police science, data-processing, etc.); the community colleges are left with the feeling that senior institutions regard the former's courses as inferior. In many instances, too, certain departments within senior institutions either limit the number of transfer students they will accept into their programs or require higher grade point averages

from transfers than they do native students in order to be accepted into a program. In sum, community colleges charge the senior institutions with operating on a double-standard for native students and transfer students, perpetuating paternalism in terms of making value judgments about the quality of community college courses, and failing to focus their major attention on needs of the students as opposed to arbitrary requirements.

Although major obstacles include far more than simply the difficulties in transfer of courses, credit recognition, and admissions standards, it is the articulation--or lack of articulation--of courses and credits between two-year and four-year institutions that are the most blatant and clearly identifiable of the underlying "deep-seated philosophical positions" of these two segments of higher education. Furniss and Martin, (1974), perhaps, furnish the most complete delineation of specific barriers that articulation efforts must address themselves to in terms of the lack of agreements that still exist in the credit/course areas:

1. Lack of agreement on minimum grade point average
2. Lack of standardization of grading systems
3. Difficulty with pass/fail grading systems
4. Lack of synchronized academic calendars
5. Lack of agreement on external degree standards
6. Lack of agreement on validity of credit for life experiences
7. Lack of agreement on validity of correspondence courses
8. Lack of agreement on validity of adult education courses
9. Lack of problem-specific counseling
10. Lack of standardized admission standards
11. Lack of agreement on core curricula
12. Lack of understanding of course content and objectives
13. Lack of coordination between admissions offices and departmental requirements
14. Associate of Arts not recognized
15. Lack of agreement on acceptability of CLEP and USAFI tests
16. Lack of agreement on CLEP and USAFI test scores
17. Lack of agrrement on external degree standards
18. Lack of agreement on credit by examination
19. Lack of recognition of educational experiences in the military
20. Lack of recognition of educational experiences in penal institutions
21. Remedial and technical courses not transferable
22. Discrepancies in residence requirements

23. Lack of compliance with state legal requirements
24. Discrepancies in financial aid: transfer and native students
25. Refusal to accept "old" credits
26. Undefined provisions for waiver of requirements
27. Lack of agreement on credits from accredited and non-accredited colleges
28. Lack of provisions for transfer of credits from proprietary institutions

III. Toward Overcoming Major Obstacles in Articulation

If solutions to the delineated obstacles to smooth articulation are to come to fruition, both community colleges and senior institutions need to come to grips with four current realities:

1. Research on transfer students, their abilities and their problems, indicates that they are as inherently "able" as native students (Cross, 1968).
2. No longer can both types of institutions be content to "do what has always been done" in terms of their roles and missions in higher education. Institutions of higher education need to delineate mutually exclusive and complementary educational roles in terms of education services offered. Moreover, they need to develop mutually compatible definitions of these roles (Blocker, 1966).
3. All must recognize that there are substantial differences in costs incurred in the education of students in the lower, upper, and graduate divisions and be cognizant of how costs relate to transfer practices.
4. Finally, all must recognize that changes in course curricula promise to be rapid at a rate unprecedented in the past. What, then, are specific practices which institutions can implement to smooth the

path of articulation between the two types of institutions, and who should be charged with implementation of these practices? Kintzer (1973 B), Kuhns (1974), and the Joint Committee on Junior and Senior Colleges (1966) offer the following recommendations.

A. Admissions

1. The faculty of senior institutions should establish and publicize criteria for validation of prior educational experiences (i.e., grade point average requirements for junior status) which do not differentiate between native and transfer students.
2. The administration of senior institutions should admit transfer students with a "C" average while 1) counseling high-risk students toward appropriate institutions and career choices, and 2) giving priority to those with the highest probability of success.
3. The administration of community colleges should encourage completion of all lower-division work before transfer.
4. Specific admission standards, including the minimum g. p. a., the general education requirements, and any exceptions, should be stated clearly and objectively by the administration of senior institutions and published widely by the administration of community colleges so that potential transfers may assess their position and eligibility for entry to an upper-division institution at any time.

B. Evaluation of Transfer Credits

1. The faculty of both institutions should establish and publicize criteria for assigning credit to nontraditional educational experiences (i.e., proprietary schools, independent study) and nontraditional evaluation procedures (i.e., challenge exams such as CLEP, CASE).

2. The faculty of senior institutions should examine course prerequisites, faculty and departmental permission required for course enrollment, and admission and graduation requirements to determine whether they are explicit, consistent, relevant, nondiscriminatory, and necessary.

3. The faculty of both institutions should modularize courses to permit students' attainment of essential prerequisites without registering for an entire course, and to facilitate matching of courses in sending and receiving institutions.

4. The administration of senior institutions should guarantee that students intending to transfer to their institutions receive a precise evaluation of credits, that all courses passed at the community college are placed on the receiving institution's transcript, and that completion of the AA degree transfer programs is equivalent to upper-division standing at time of transfer.

5. The administration of senior institutions should accept transfer credit up to one-half the number of credits required for the baccalaureate degree. All community college courses which satisfy the requirements of a baccalaureate degree should recieve subject credit irrespective of any restriction of the maximum allowable number of transfer credits. This allowance need not, however, preclude the requirement of additional electives or advanced courses for the completion of an upper-division program.

6. The administration of senior institutions should evaluate a "D" grade for transfers on the same basis as those earned by native students while reserving the right to advise any student to repeat courses which will enhance his/her academic progress.

7. The administration of senior institutions should indicate to each of the community colleges from which a sizeable number of students transfer those courses offered by each community college which are acceptable for transfer. An annual review, with particular attention to new courses, should be performed, with this information widely disseminated. All requirements concerning parallel and equivalent courses made between four-year institutions and community colleges should be documented and communicated to academic advisors, counselors, deans, administrators, officials, registrars, faculty members, and staff personnel who evaluate transcripts.

C. Curriculum Planning

1. The administration of senior institutions should develop and publish specific guidelines for transfer by major concentration including a) any recommended pre-transfer courses and post-transfer requirements and b) the name of the academic officer responsible for answering the transfer student's questions concerning each listed program.
2. The administration of both institutions should inform transfer students that they will be subjected to graduation requirements in the senior institution's catalogue current at the time they enter their junior year. Any subsequent condition or qualification should apply to natives as well. Impending curriculum changes affecting future transfers should be communicated with sufficient "lead time" to permit implementation of program or policy modifications with a minimum of disruption to existing programs.
3. The administration of community colleges should assist potential transfers in making early choices of senior institution and major,

and plan course programs with the students to satisfy upper-division requirements of that institution. Senior institutions, however, need to provide flexibility and cooperation to the student who diverts, or is diverted from, his original choice.

4. The administration of both institutions, through a program of incentives for faculty, should encourage research and experimentation in the assessment of learning experiences and in the modularizing of course and competency units.

5. The administration of both institutions should encourage the exchange of faculty between two-year and four-year institutions in order to promote mutual understanding of course content and curricula in both institutions.

D. Academic Advising

1. The administration of both institutions should develop systematic procedures whereby community college counselors and advisors will continually obtain from the senior institution information on student characteristics of the senior college and performance of transfers from the community colleges.

2. The administration of both institutions should focus more attention on the academic advising of transfer students; specifically, the senior institution should make an early assignment of an academic advisor to transfer students and select only those as advisors who are sympathetic to and well-informed about the problems of transfer students.

3. The administration of senior institutions should provide a comprehensive orientation program, distinct from that offered to the freshmen, which meets the special needs of transfer students. In addition to emphasis on the personal and social adjustments which the student will experience, transfer students should be alerted to procedures for appealing credit evaluation decisions and graduation requirements, whether or not yet completed.

IV. Trends and Practices in Statewide Articulation

Kintzer (1973 B) believes that statewide articulation is inevitable, that interinstitutional agreements, although important, will become less significant than statewide agreements. If statewide articulation plans become a reality, they will be political accomplishments by state governments not educational accomplishments. Organized efforts to develop statewide articulation agreements are under way in approximately one-half of the states, with the trend toward plans focusing on the successful completion of the Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree as the accepted transfer standard.

What constitutes a successful statewide plan? Strawbridge and Wattenbarger (1967) specify the following elements:

1. A representative body of professional persons who are responsible for developing techniques and avenues for solving transfer difficulties and for expressing specific guidelines which may be used by all institutions
2. Backing of legal bodies responsible for operation of the institutions
3. Commitment by the representatives of institutions to seek solutions problems
4. Staff to follow through on details

5. Constant and alert attention to all matters related to articulation

To these, Kintzer (1973 A) adds the following:

6. Flexibility to accommodate new practices on admission and placement as well as grading
7. Maximize communication
8. Protect integrity of all types of institutions involved in articulation

Wattenbarger's model for the flow of an articulation program is shown in Figure 1 (Kintzer, B). Basically, it exemplifies the "total scope" concept providing full and continuous participation essential to the long-term success of a plan. The several key elements provided herein include: 1) legal structure, 2) grass roots level in the communication system, 3) professional organization, 4) communications machinery, and 5) provisions for contributions from college community members on a volunteer basis. Kintzer believes an appeals system should be added to allow the transfer student a chance to air grievances against the process.

Kintzer, in his recent book Middleman in Higher Education, indicates there are three basic styles of articulation agreements prevalent today (Kintzer, B):

1. Statewide formal agreements
2. Agreements defined primarily under leadership of a state-governing agency or institutional system that includes or is composed exclusively of community colleges
3. Agreements developed on a voluntary basis among groups or institutions

Statewide Formal Agreements. Examples of this type include Florida, Georgia, Texas, and Illinois. In Florida, articulation is based on the under-

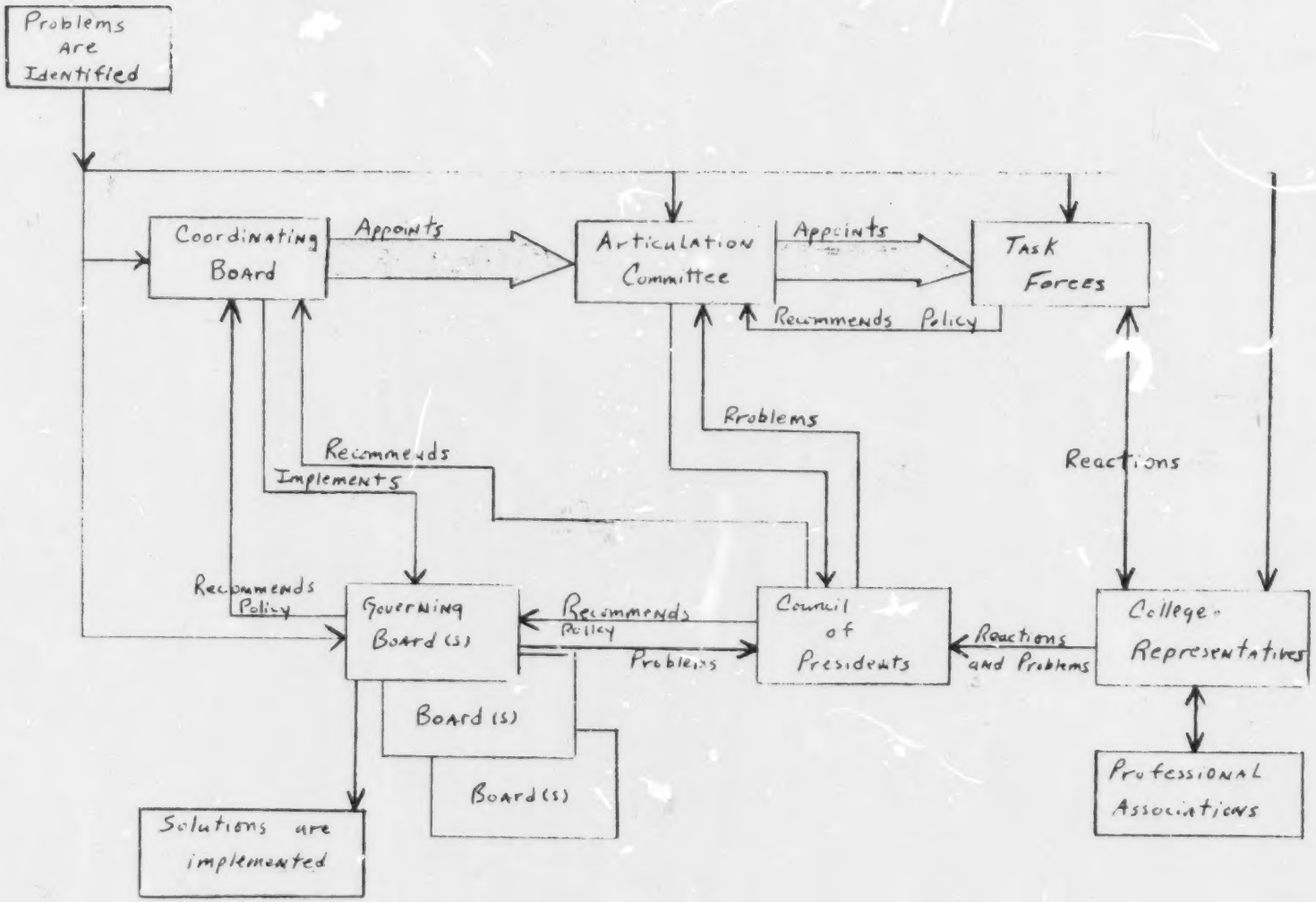

Figure 1

Model for developing solutions to articulation problems on a statewide basis.

standing that the transfer process should be accomplished without barriers and that institutional integrity (primarily of the community colleges and their AA/AS degrees) should be maintained. Among the policies supporting the basic plan are the following:

- --the agreement that community college transfers should have met general education requirements if so stipulated by the community colleges
- --acceptance of the AA degree by senior and upper-division institutions
- --students receiving the AA will be admitted to junior standing within the university system
- --the baccalaureate degree will be awarded in all state universities in recognition of lower-division combined with upper-division work
- --lower-division programs in all state institutions enrolling freshmen and sophomores may offer introductory courses permitting students to explore principle professional specializations that can be pursued at the baccalaureate level
- --each state university shall include in its official catalogue of undergraduate courses a section stipulating lower-division requirements for each upper-division specialization or major program
- --experimental programs (e.g., joint programs) in all institutions are encouraged
- --a community college-university coordinating committee will be established to review and evaluate current articulation policies and formulate additional policies as needed.

While both Georgia and Texas have articulation plans built around "core curriculum," Illinois is the only state with a legally-based plan of articulation. In that state, Sections 102-111 of the Illinois Junior College Act passed by the general assembly in 1965 gives basic responsibility of articulation procedure development and maintenance to the Illinois Junior College Board; cooperation with the four-year institutions allows an environment for the development of articulation procedures. The basic philosophy behind Illinois articulation is found in the Master Plan, Phase One, Two, and Three, which declares that future lower-division education rests largely in the hands of the community colleges, and that transfer preference should be given to community college graduates over all other students at Illinois state colleges and universities.

State System Policies. Both of the two distinct types of plans that fall into this category are relatively inflexible. Heavy responsibility for policy development and implementation is held by the first of these types, the state agency. North Carolina's two-year and post-high school institutions are supervised by the State Board of Education. In 1965, a Joint Committee on College Transfer Students was appointed and under its auspices regular articulation conferences are held. This Joint Committee has developed a reference manual entitled, "Policies of Senior Colleges and Universities Concerning Transfer Students from Two-Year Colleges in North Carolina." Articulation issues are referred to the Joint Committee, which serves as a sounding board and forum for discussing transfer problems. Other states with this type of state system plan are Oklahoma, Oregon, and Virginia.

In those states (Kentucky, Hawaii, Nevada, Wisconsin, Arizona, Iowa, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Washington) having an institutionally-based system, policy development and implementation are centered in the institutional board, as in the Board of Trustees at the University of Kentucky. In that state, the community colleges are an integral part of the university. They were formerly called "university centers." Transfer courses in the community colleges parallel those offered on the university campus and may be transferred directly to the university or to other public or private institutions. Technical courses designed to meet requirements of the two-year terminal programs offered by the community colleges are considered for university transfer on an individual basis just as courses would be from an accredited institution.

In 1967, the state of Washington was divided into twenty-two independent districts with a State Board for Community College Education to coordinate and govern community colleges. The prevailing philosophy in this state is predicated

on voluntary and cooperative articulation guidelines. The belief is that guidelines based on mutual respect are significantly more effective than mandatory state guidelines. Articulation matters in Washington have had as their foundation a growing acceptance on the part of senior institutions, and less of an intense scrutiny, of the courses offered by the community colleges. A single source for coordination of transfer activities at the senior institution is gaining widespread acceptance. For example, Western Washington State College has a Coordinator of College Relations. At Washington State University the Director of Admissions oversees community college relations. That institution's communication with the community colleges is enhanced by their regularly-issued booklet of course equivalencies, Transfer Programs for Washington Community Colleges. At the University of Washington, the Office of College Relations publishes Mobility of Undergraduate College Students Between Washington Colleges and Universities which reports data for each fall quarter. In addition, a booklet similar to the WSU publication listing community college transfer and equivalent courses as well as departmental and major requirements is produced. These booklets have aided the development of statewide and interinstitutional cooperation.

During the fall of 1970, the Council on Higher Education in the state of Washington directed the various college and universities to convene and establish recommendations for the acceptance of the associate of arts degree as normal transfer currency. This associate of arts agreement applies primarily to general education. Transfer students must still meet lower-division requirements in the major, minor, and professional programs.

Each senior institution in Washington has the flexibility to develop its own approach within the confines of state and interinstitutional agreements.

At the University of Washington, the academic record of a transfer student must show an overall 2.00 for residents and 3.00 for non-residents. Western and Central Washington State Colleges use the associate of arts degree in meeting general education requirements. Transfer students are accepted in junior standing without course and credit scrutiny. At Seattle University, the associate of arts degree does not automatically meet lower-division general education requirements. Washington State University has taken the biggest step in announcing full recognition and total acceptance of the associate of arts degree. Since 1972, transfer students to WSU have been granted full junior standing on completion of all general university graduation requirements.

Voluntary Agreements Among Institutions. This style is based primarly on voluntary negotiation and cooperation, and is prevalent in California and Michigan. In California, the Articulation Conference has figured heavily in the development of their system of articulation. Theirs is related to The Master Plan for Higher Education, which formed part of the Donahoe Act of 1960. In principle, the articulation plan is based on the belief that students should be able to move freely from the community college to the University of California or state universities and colleges with normal progress. All students who enter California public higher education as freshmen and maintain a satisfactory level of academic performance should be able to progress to the baccalaureate degree without encountering arbitrary barriers.

An Articulation Conference composed of all segments of public higher education in California is the cornerstone of the articulation plan in this state. Generally, the University Academic Senate at the University of California has delegated authority in matters of transfer to the director of admissions and the registrar. If a community college course is found transferable, it is automatically applied toward a degree on any university campus.

Michigan's Modified Articulation Conference Plan is cooperative and voluntary. Room to maneuver is allowed for handling unusual and individual transfer situations. A Report of Acceptance and Application of Community College Credits Toward Degree Requirements at Four-Year Institutions is the volume giving detailed information about requirements at Michigan's senior institutions.

Directions for AA/BA Articulation in the 1970's. Kintzer, in his volume Middleman in Higher Education, states that articulation programs through the remainder of the decade should result in widespread gains in the efficiency of student transfer activities. Through the 1970's, greater involvement in and control of the articulation process by state agencies will be in evidence. In most of the fifty states, some type of statewide articulation authority is working on systematizing policies. Kintzer mentions nine other future-oriented developments:

1. State organizations should supplement but not replace local committees for articulation.
2. Improved computer technology will become widely utilized in streamlining the transfer process.
3. Representatives of private institutions should continue to be involved in statewide planning.
4. Core curriculum plans of articulation will continue to serve widely scattered states but will probably not experience widespread growth.
5. Interest of the federal government in equal educational opportunity will continue to increase. The U. S. Office of Education has already expressed interest in articulation problems and broadening communication.

6. Total acceptance of the associate degree will develop rapidly and become commonplace by the end of the decade.
7. Emphasis on career education should help redistribute students in occupational majors and ultimately into baccalaureate programs.
8. Much greater attention needs to be paid to high school-community college articulation.
9. There will be widespread changes in grading policies, with one of the most promising being that of multidimensional grading.

Because AA/BA articulation is a process that is dependent for success on attitudes held by participants, the most effective articulation program is largely a result of a carefully developed partnership by the major participants: high schools, community colleges, and senior colleges. Despite the style of articulation agreement used, this factor seems to stand out above most others. A positive, cooperative relationship among major participants can accomplish what no formal plan is able to do to establish efficient, meaningful articulation policies.

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